

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 RABAT 01955 010851Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5008

S E C R E T RABAT 1955

EXDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS MO SS
SUBJECT: KING HASSAN'S COMMENTS ON OV-10S AND COBRAS

1. AT SMALL MARCH 20 DINNER, WHICH WAS OUR FIRST MEETING SINCE MY RETURN FROM WASHINGTON FIVE DAYS EARLIER, KING HASSAN WELCOMED ME IN HIS CUSTOMARILY WARM MANNER AND SAID LAUGHINGLY, "WELL, I SEE YOU WERE NOT ABLE TO BRING ME BACK THE OV-10'S." AFTER GREETING THE OTHER GUESTS, HE SAID HE WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT HE HAD NO NEED AT THIS TIME FOR THE OV-10'S AND THE COBRAS, THAT THE SITUATION WAS WELL IN HAND IN THE SAHARA, BUT THAT HE WOULD DEFINITELY NEED THE OV-10'S AND COBRAS IN THE FUTURE FOR THE DEFENSE OF HIS COUNTRY AGAINST ANY ATTACK BY ALGERIA.

2. IN A FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATION SAME EVENING WITH A HIGH-RANKING AMERICAN VISITOR HASSAN EXPANDED ON WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME EARLIER. HE SAID THAT MOROCCO DOES NOT REALLY NEED THE OV-10'S AND COBRAS FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE SAHARA, BUT THEY ARE REQUIRED FOR THE GENERAL DEFENSIVE PLAN FOR MOROCCO. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE NOTED GOM WAS RECEIVING SIXTY-TWO NEW PUMA HELICOPTERS AND SEVENTY-FIVE MIRAGE F-1 AIRCRAFT WITH DELIVERY OF THE LATTER TO BEGIN IN APRIL.

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3. COMMENT: AS WAS THE CASE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOUCETTA AND SECRETARY VANCE, KING HASSAN ACCEPTS OUR PRESENT INABILITY TO APPROACH THE CONGRESS ON THE SALE OF OV-10'S AND COBRAS, BUT ALREADY COUNTS ON A FORTHCOMING U.S. RESPONSE ONCE THE TEMPORARY PROBLEM CITED BY THE SECRETARY (I.E. SALE OF AIRCRAFT TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA) IS OVERCOME.

ANDERSON

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NNN

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